



Reading methods

Depending on your purpose, you may read a text in different ways or combine several methods to get the most out of your reading.

	READING METHOD	PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY
BEFORE READING	Reading to get an overview	A prerequisite for subsequent reading. You read to get a first impression of the text. You look through the text. You read only the title, chapter and section headings, preface, abstract, table of contents and the conclusion to find out about the structure, difficulty and usefulness of the text.
	Skimming	A “superficial” and unfocused reading method. You read to acquaint yourself with the content (volume, type and level) and the form (presentation and language). You read quickly and superficially. You want to gain an overview of the content and the main topics of the text or identify passages that you want to read more carefully.
WHILE READING	Normal reading	A way to become more familiar with the material. You read to gain an understanding of the content and meaning of the text. You read the whole text in order to grasp: the key message, the full perspective, the line of thought, the unifying theme, the argumentation, the structure, the main issue and the results.
	Thorough, intensive reading	You read to learn in detail. You read “word for word” in order to master the content, retrieve specific information, memorize, and reproduce nuances.
	Reading to retrieve information	Reading focused on specific information. Using the reference work taxonomy, you retrieve specific pieces of information as needed.
	Selective reading	Controlled reading. You read to find particular information. You read specific parts of the text or you read the text through a lens that serves your particular purpose, for example a specific assignment.
AFTER READING	PROCESSING THE TEXT	
	In order to learn from reading, you must process the texts you read by talking and writing about them in your own words. For example, you can make mind maps, take notes, write summaries, make presentations in your study group and discuss the academic content of the texts with fellow students.	

